



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



SD CONTINUES TO HONOR WWII HEROES

Roger Dwyer, Jerauld County Veterans Service Officer used Memorial Day as the day to honor World War II Veterans in Jerauld County. It was also American Legion Post 14's 99th birthday celebration.

This day also provided Dwyer the opportunity to present Mr. DiCarlo with his combat medic badge. DeCarlo, who lived in New York and recently moved to South Dakota, had been working with the NY legislative leaders for over 20 years to get this badge. With the assistance of Dwyer and SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Bowen, DiCarlo had his badge within eight weeks. Private DiCarlo unhesitantly and with complete disregard for personal safety, rendered first aid treatment and assisted in the evacuation of the wounded to a battalion aid station. The citation reads "Private Di Carlo's high devotion to duty and calmness under fire aided immeasurably in the saving of many lives, reflects great credit on himself and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the Medical Department.



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MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN

Find the key, unlock the message!

This past year we set out on a mission to find and recognize all of South Dakota's living World War II Veterans. We called it Operation Whirlwind. When we started on this venture there were over 2,200 living World War II Veterans in South Dakota. Six months later, this is not the case. The reality is in a few years there won't be any living World War II Veterans and many of their stories will not have been shared.

Documenting veteran's stories is a way to archive our history, but it is also a great way to develop an appreciation for their experiences. It shows how far we've come and how far we have yet to go.

Veterans memories are of great value to family and friends. Some veterans freely discuss their service. However, many are not comfortable discussing their past. It is important for us to document their stories for future generations. There is nothing better than hearing first-hand what it was like to be there – the visuals, sounds, the smells, the fears, the feelings, the delay in communication. Our World War II, Vietnam and Korean Veterans didn't have Instagram, Facebook, Skype, FaceTime or Twitter. They may have gone months without communication from their families.

The past few years I have had the opportunity to be a part of the Korean War Legacy Foundation and the Korean War Digital History Project. Their goal is to preserve stories and pictures from Korean War heroes, creating a permanent legacy for future generations. Their program instructs social studies teachers on collecting and preserving veteran's stories.

Unlocking the chest of wars and veteran's experiences can be very rewarding. If the key can be found and the chest opened, the stories will flow and history will be documented for future generations.

It is key for all of us to let veterans tell their stories. Listen, listen and listen. Our education and awareness of their stories is a key to their healing and an opportunity for us to hear first-hand the issues and struggles they faced.

As Americans celebrate Independence Day, flags will be raised, parades will stroll through the streets, patriotic music will be played and hopefully our heroes will share their war stories for us to welcome, appreciate, and treasure.



Larry Zimmerman, Secretary

VA PROVIDES REORGANIZATION PLAN

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced specific recommendations in the President's "[Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century](#)" - Reform Plan and Reorganization Recommendations."

The plan is the result of President Trump's Executive Order 13781 – "Executive Order on a Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch," signed March 13, 2017. Specific mentions of VA are on page 57 and 125 on the document above.

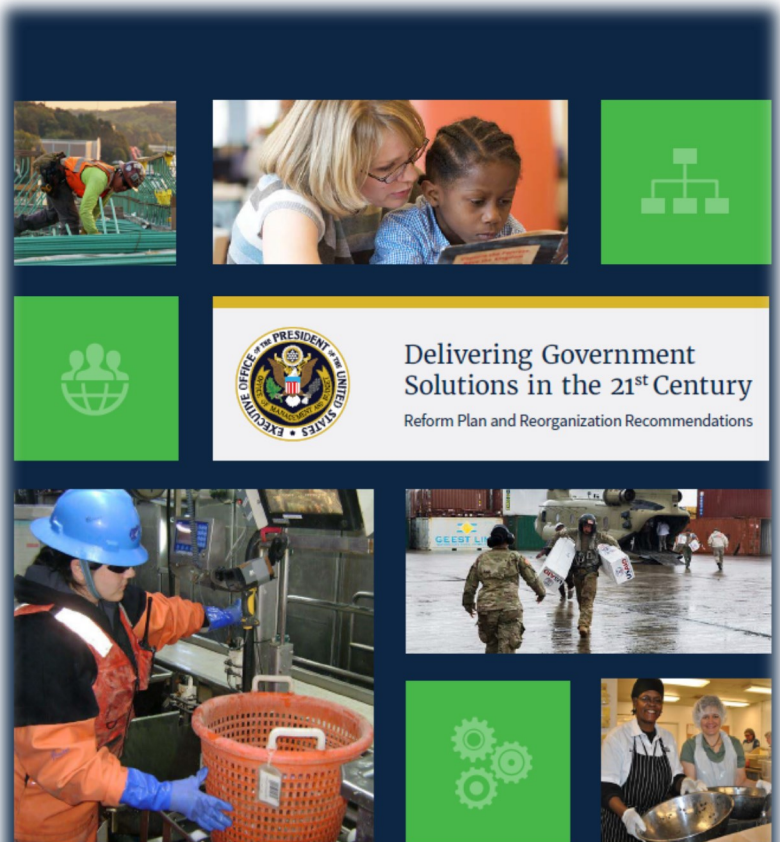
The Executive Order directed all federal agencies to submit a plan to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the executive branch of government.

The proposed recommendations seek to modernize VA by reducing bureaucracy, increasing accountability and improving delivery of services to America's Veterans and their loved ones.

"Under President Trump, we are embarking on the largest transformation and modernization effort in recent history. As part of this effort, we are tackling head-on issues that have lingered for years," said Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs Peter O'Rourke.

The plan outlines five modernization initiatives intended to enable VA to more effectively deliver benefits and services to America's Veterans. These initiatives include: Electronic Health Record, Community Care, Appeals Modernization, Financial Management Business Transformation and Legacy IT System Modernization.

Additionally, the plan calls for the transfer of 11 military and veterans cemeteries from the Department of the Army to VA's National Cemetery Administration. The transfer would increase efficiency, limit mission overlap and ensure that these cemeteries are maintained to national shrine standards. The VA will develop a proposal for the transfer, continuous care and operation of these eleven sites.



GET CONNECTED CLASS

FOR VETERANS ENROLLED IN THE VA

This class has been designed to teach Veterans enrolled in the VA how to:

- access their medical records
- request appointments online
- request prescriptions renewals
- send messages to their healthcare team
- download a VA healthcare app
- and how to have your visits right from the comfort of your own home (there is **no copay** for these appointments)!
- This is a free class and all modalities taught are free to the Veteran!

DATE: JULY 13, 2018

TIME: 10:30AM-1:00PM

(THIS IS A DROP IN CLASS. YOU DO NOT NEED TO REGISTER OR CALL AHEAD. JUST COME ON IN AND BRING YOUR DEVICE!)

LOCATION: SIOUX FALLS VA

ROOM 2009 ON SECOND FLOOR OF PRIMARY CARE, BUILDING 5

WHAT TO BRING:

- Smart phone
- Laptop
- Tablet with camera and access to email
- Photo ID



Your Life
Your Health
Your
schedule

Hands on
training

QUESTIONS:
CALL

605-336-
3230,
9-7839

SIOUX FALLS VA
HOSPITAL
2501 W. 22ND ST
SIOUX FALLS, SD
57105

WEDNESDAY
JULY 13
10:30AM- 1:00PM
DROP IN
ANYTIME

WELCOME HOME HELD FOR STATE AL AUX. PRESIDENT

South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Department President Jeannine Loesch's homecoming was held Saturday, June 23, in Fort Pierre.

Her son Justin, who is an Iraqi Combat Veteran served as the emcee for the celebration.

SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Swanson presented a letter of congratulations from Secretary Zimmerman as well as SDDVA's Challenge Coin.

President Loesch's theme for her year in office is "Saddle Up for Veterans."



VABHHCS STAND DOWN

VA Black Hills Health Care Center and numerous partners hosted a Veterans Stand Down in Eagle Butte last week. Collectively, the group provided information on VA benefits, housing referrals, employment services, legal assistance, readjustment counseling, state benefits, education benefits and healthcare.

SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Swanson represented the Department at the Stand Down and assisted veterans with benefits and claims information.

A Stand Down refers to a grassroots, community-based intervention program designed to help veterans renew their spirit, health and overall sense of well-being.



NATIONAL CADET COMPETITION

Highly skilled Civil Air Patrol cadets from communities across America gather near Dayton, Ohio, this weekend for the 2018 National Cadet Competition, renewing a prestigious CAP inspection and drill event that has spanned eight decades. Launched in 1947, the National Cadet Competition has inspired generations of cadets to strive for excellence. Scheduled for June 30 to July 2 at Wright State University, this year's competition will be held in front of special guests that include senior U.S. Air Force and CAP personnel.

"These hard-working cadets will be in the national spotlight this week, and rightly so," said Maj. Gen. Mark Smith, CAP national commander. "They work year-round to get here."

The 96 cadets participating in the competition earned the right to attend by winning local, state and regional competitions. Seven of CAP's eight regions are represented by competitors from 14 wings -- California, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, National Capital, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Puerto Rico, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The cadets will be competing on six-member teams, demonstrating skills in events that involve precision and teamwork. These skills include indoor and outdoor color guard challenges, a written test of leadership and aerospace knowledge, a physical fitness test, team leadership problems (group problem-solving challenges) and a uniform inspection.

Each year, National Headquarters also chooses electives for the competition that represent all aspects of cadet life. This year, teams will participate in a pre-competition service project to be presented at the competition, as well as robotics, a panel quiz-style game and a test of color guard drill. Judges will include members of the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Honor Guard and CAP officers and cadets.

The winning cadet team takes home the Air Force Chief of Staff Sweepstakes Award Trophy. Second- and third-place team trophies will also be presented, along with individual awards for cadets competing in several categories, including top written exam score and fastest mile run.

The National Cadet Competition is one of nearly 50 National Cadet Special Activities, or NCSAs, sponsored by CAP this summer. Each NCSA allows young men and women ages 12-20 to hone their skills in specific areas like search and rescue, flight and emergency services, science, leadership fundamentals, citizenship and military courtesies, and gives them the opportunity to explore aerospace technology, STEM and aviation careers. Last year, more than 1,500 youth participated in CAP-sponsored NCSAs.

The South Dakota Wing team, one of three teams from CAP's North Central Region, participating in the 2018 National Cadet Competition consists of: Cadet Technical Sergeant Lydia Klosterman (Brandon) of the Big Sioux Composite Squadron in Brookings and Cadet Second Lieutenant Sydnie Cloutier (Sioux Falls), Cadet Staff Sergeant Micah Healy (Mitchell), Cadet Senior Airman Noah Healy (Mitchell), Cadet Master Sergeant Kaleb Sarchet (Valley Springs) and Cadet Chief Master Sergeant Peter Willison (Sioux Falls), all members of the Sioux Falls Composite Squadron in Sioux Falls.



\$20/RIDER | \$10/PASSENGER

FLATLANDERS MILITIAMEN

6TH ANNUAL | VMC

POKER RUN


SHIPWRECK BAR
CHESTER, SD
SATURDAY | JULY 28TH

50/50
DRAWING
RAFFLE
PRIZES

10:00am - Registration
11:00am - Run Starts
5:00pm - Last Bike In

BEST POKER HAND: \$500 | \$250 | \$100

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT
SHAWN @ 605-645-9719



BLACK HILLS VETERANS JOB FAIR

Veterans in search for work opportunities and benefits were provided a great opportunity to visit with Black Hills community leaders and partners during the sixth annual job fair held at Western Dakota Tech in Rapid City this week.

SDDVA Education Representative Ryan Fowler was on hand to provide information on education benefits, apprenticeship program and the GI Bill®.

Veterans and their families had the opportunity to meet with over 75 businesses and organizations.



KOREA REBORN BOOKS

SDDVA has received another shipment of the “Korean Reborn—A Grateful Nation” book. If you need any for your office or for veterans in your service area, please give Audry a call (605-773-8242).

This book honors war veterans for 60 years. It is a retrospective look at the Korean War and the years of prosperity that followed. The photos and text tell the story from the perspective of U.S. Veterans who served in the conflict and the Koreans who prospered from the freedom left in their wake. This 160-page volume honors those veterans who served and sacrificed for a free Korea.



SDNG RECOGNIZED BY SAIGE

The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) presented their Military Meritorious Service Award to a South Dakota Army National Guard Soldier during the 15th Annual SAIGE National Training Program in Green Bay, June 14.

Retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 William White, of Rockyford, S.D., received the award honoring military members and Department of Defense civilian employees who have supported the DoD mission, overseas contingency operations, or whose attributes best epitomized the qualities and core values of their respective military service or other DoD component.

White, who retired from the SDARNG in October 2017, received the award for exceptional meritorious service to the United States, the South Dakota National Guard and the Native American Veterans and their families representative of the Great Native American Tribes of Cheyenne River, Crow Creek, Oglala, Standing Rock, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Rosebud and Yankton.

"Being recognized from an indigenous group was rewarding," White said. "My hope is other people were able to see what we are doing in South Dakota and it gives them ideas on directions to go."

White was involved with various projects that assist in relationships with the SDNG and Native American communities in South Dakota during his more than 38 years with the SDARNG, 31 of which he spent full time as a technician.

His most recent project, and one he took the lead on, was a Native American Cultural Day held at Camp Rapid during the Golden Coyote training exercise in June 2017. The event included dancer and drum groups, dream catcher and bow maker hands-on activities, a buffalo historian, and food samplings showcasing Native American culture.

Another event White was involved with was the Oceti Sakowin Code Talker Congressional Medallion Exhibit, which toured several South Dakota cities in 2015 in observance of Native American Heritage Month.

The traveling exhibit honored code talker veterans, their families and all veterans who served or are currently serving in the military. The medals, which were showcased for the public to view, are Congress' highest recognition and appreciation of people, institutions or events.

White's Military Meritorious Service Award citation mention the success of the event's due to his involvement and concludes with, "His dedication to his country and his heritage reflect great credit upon him, his family, his tribe the Oglala Sioux Tribe, the South Dakota Army National Guard and the United States of America."

SAIGE is a national non-profit organization advocating for American Indian and Alaska Native people in the government workforce by providing them the necessary tools in their efforts to reach their full potential.



GUARD BATTALION CONCLUDES MTO COURSE

The South Dakota Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute) conducted its final Motor Transport Operators Course in Sioux Falls, April 14 - May 11.

The four-week performance-oriented course that trains and qualifies soldiers on various wheeled vehicles for the 88M military occupational specialty will be taught elsewhere due to course reorganization throughout the National Guard.

"The changes that took place reorganizing the course were out of our hands and it's unfortunate that the South Dakota RTI is losing this mission, however, as we look forward, we will gain students in other areas and this battalion will continue to lead the way, developing and training Soldiers to increase the readiness of the Army," said Lt. Col. LeeJay Templeton, 2/196th RTI commander.

The RTI has conducted nearly 20 motor transport operator courses since 2008.

The final class taught in South Dakota, Class 001-18, consisted of 11 Soldiers, from six states throughout the nation, who gained experience during phase I operating medium tactical wheeled vehicles.

Students traveled 600 Medium Tactical Vehicle driving miles and 2,870 driving miles with the M915/M872 tractor-semitrailer combination.

During phase II, students became proficient in operating the Load Handling System M1120A4, Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck.

A graduation ceremony was held for the Soldiers who successfully completed the course and were awarded the motor transport operator military occupational specialty qualification, May 11.

"I have been instructing the Motor Transport Operators Courses since 2014 and it has been a pleasure to be part of the mission to train Soldiers on the vehicles and convoy operations to take the knowledge and experience back to their units," said Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Zuraff, course manager/primary instructor for the final course. "It is unfortunate that we are losing this mission, but we look forward to continuing to train Soldiers in other courses here at the RTI."

The 196th Regiment (RTI) provides a model environment for training future leaders for the Army National Guard and provides general instruction on a variety of military courses. The RTI received 100% during the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command accreditation process and is considered an institute of excellence. This mission and operation in accordance with these standards increases readiness levels of units throughout the Department of Defense.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Jul 4—Independence Day (state offices closed)
 Jul 7—Veterans for Veterans Annual Poker Run—Mitchell Depot—1:00 pm (CT)
 Jul 11—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
 Jul 12—Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Cemetery Grand Opening—Sisseton—11:00 am (CT)
 Jul 13—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Education Classroom—Fort Meade—10:00 am (MT)
 Jul 14—VVA SD State Council Third Quarter Meeting—Pierre Post 8 American Legion—11:00 am (CT)
 Jul 14-17—DAV National Convention—Reno, NV
 Jul 21-25—VFW National Convention—Kansas City, MO
 Jul 26—VABHHCS Veterans Town Hall—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre 11:00 am—4:00 pm (CT)
 Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre
 Aug 24-30—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN
 Sept 3—Labor Day (state offices closed)
 Sept 11—Improving Veterans Care Conference—BHSU (4300 Cheyenne Boulevard) - Rapid City
 Sept 14—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—10:00 am (MT)
 Sept 21—7th Annual POW/MIA Program—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park (1021 W. Bailey Street) 6:30 pm (CT)
 Oct 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Soldiers and Sailors Building—Pierre—8:00 am (CT)
 Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)



Save *the* Date

**Improving
Veterans Care
Conference**



This mental health summit delivers important information that will assist healthcare providers and other professionals as they work to support families of Veterans and our Citizen Soldiers in South Dakota.

This one-day mental health summit will be held in Rapid City.

Black Hills State University Center
 4300 Cheyenne Boulevard
 Rapid City, South Dakota

★
**Tuesday
September 11, 2018**

To register & for details contact Northeast SD AHEC:
www.nesdahec.org or call (605)229-8305








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